

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TAGS SHUM, CS

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

1. ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT FOR COSTA RICA HAS BEEN
GIVEN FINAL APPROVAL BY DEPUTY SECRETARY AND WILL BE
TRANSMITTED TO CONGRESS SHORTLY. FINAL TEXT QUOTED BELOW.
THIS TEXT IS BEING DELIVERED TO COSTA RICAN EMBASSY IN
WASHINGTON ON JANUARY 30.

2. AS DEPUTY SECRETARY DIRECTED, FOLLOWING POINTS ARE
BEING USED AS FRAMEWORK FOR THE PRESENTATION.

-- THE EFFECT OF NEW LEGISLATION WHICH BECAME LAW LAST
YEAR IS TO REQUIRE THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO SUBMIT A
'FULL AND COMPLETE' REPORT ON THE STATUS OF INTER-
NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS IN EACH COUNTRY WHICH
RECEIVES EITHER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE OR SECURITY
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ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES. (IT MAY BE USEFUL
TO PROVIDE THE TEXT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL PROVISION.)

-- WE BROUGHT THIS LEGAL REQUIREMENT TO THE ATTENTION
OF YOUR GOVERNMENT LAST NOVEMBER.

(FOR COUNTRIES RECEIVING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE)

AT THAT TIME, WE PROVIDED YOU (YOUR AUTHORITIES) WITH
THE TEXT OF THE NEW LEGISLATION.

109 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE
CONGRESS ON OR ABOUT JANUARY 31. WE ARE PROVIDING
YOU WITH A PRIVATE ADVANCE COPY OF THE REPORT PREPARED
ON COSTA RICA.

-- CONGRESS HAS EXPRESSLY REQUESTED THAT INFORMATION
PUBLISHED BY INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZA-
TIONS BE INCLUDED IN THE REPORT.

-- THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WILL NOT DISTRIBUTE THESE
REPORTS TO THE PRESS OR PUBLIC OR OTHERWISE DRAW
ATTENTION TO THEM. HOWEVER, THEY WILL BE MADE A
MATTER OF PUBLIC RECORD BY THE CONGRESS AND WE EXPECT
THEY WILL RECEIVE ATTENTION IN THE PRESS.

BEGIN TEXT:

COSTA RICA IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY WITH AN
ELECTED PRESIDENT AND LEGISLATURE, AND AN INDEPENDENTLY
FUNCTIONING JUDICIARY. THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL
SYSTEM IS NOTED FOR ITS OPENNESS AND DYNAMISM. THE
ODUBER ADMINISTRATION WAS ELECTED IN 1974, WITH NEW
ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 1978. THAT GOVERNMENT
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HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE IMPROVEMENTS
AND HAS MAINTAINED THE GOOD RECORD ALREADY SET IN
HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION. THE COUNTRY IS A MODEL OF
INDEPENDENT AND IMPARTIAL ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.
COSTA RICA HAS A VERY GOOD RECORD IN THE FIELD OF
HUMAN RIGHTS.

1. RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE PERSON, INCLUDING
FREEDOM FROM:

A. TORTURE

THE COSTA RICAN CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AGAINST USE
OF TORTURE ARE FULLY RESPECTED.

B. CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR
PUNISHMENT

CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AGAINST CRUEL, INHUMAN, OR
DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT ARE FULLY RESPECTED.

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C. ARBITRARY ARREST OR IMPRISONMENT

CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AGAINST ARBITRARY ARREST OR
IMPRISONMENT ARE RESPECTED EXCEPTIONALLY WELL.

D. DENIAL OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL

CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES OF FAIR PUBLIC TRIAL ARE FULLY RESPECTED.

E. INVASION OF THE HOME

THERE ARE EFFECTIVE LEGAL SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ARBITRARY INVASION OF THE HOME.

2. GOVERNMENT POLICIES RELATING TO THE FULFILLMENT OF OF SUCH VITAL NEEDS AS FOOD, SHELTER, HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION

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THE COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE SERIOUS EFFORTS TO REDUCE BOTH RURAL AND URBAN POVERTY BY PROVIDING SOCIAL SERVICES AND GENERATING EMPLOYMENT. RECENT EXAMPLES IN THIS REGARD ARE ASSISTANCE TO SMALL LABOR-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES, CONSTRUCTION OF LOW-COST HOUSING FOR THE POOREST URBAN POPULATION, AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASIGNACIONES FAMILIARES (FAMILIES) ALLOWANCE) WELFARE SYSTEM.

IN THE HEALTH FIELD, EMPHASIS HAS BEEN ON GENERAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS. POPULATION PLANNING AND FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS ARE EXTENDED TO THE RURAL AREAS. MEDICAL SERVICES THROUGH THE NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM REACH A LARGE SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION.

3. RESPECT FOR CIVIL AND POLITICAL LIBERTIES, INCLUDING:

A. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, SPEECH, PRESS, RELIGION, AND ASSEMBLY

COSTA RICAN CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, RELIGION, AND ASSEMBLY ARE FULLY RESPECTED. THE PRESS IS COMPLETELY FREE AND PRESENTS DIVERGENT VIEWS.

B. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT WITHIN THE COUNTRY, FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TRAVEL AND EMIGRATION ARE UNHINDERED. IN ADDITION, COSTA RICA PROVIDES ASYLUM FOR MANY PEOPLE OF VARYING POLITICAL PERSUASIONS.

C. FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

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FREEDOM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS IS PROVIDED FOR IN THE COSTA RICAN CONSTITUTION AND RESPECTED FULLY IN PRACTICE. ELECTIONS ARE FREE, HIGHLY COMPETITIVE AND OPEN.

4. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE AND RECORD REGARDING INTERNATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

THE GOVERNMENT OF COSTA RICA HAS EXTENDED A STANDING INVITATION TO THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO VISIT WHENEVER IT WISHES. COSTA RICA HAS BEEN A STRONG ADVOCATE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. COSTA RICA WAS ONE OF THE FIRST TWO STATES TO RATIFY THE AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND, FOR CLOSE TO TWO DECADES, HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF THE CREATION OF A HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE UNITED NATIONS. VANCE

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